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U. A. BIOMETER

W E E K L Y B U L L E T I N

OF THE OFFICE OF

DRY LAND AGRICULTURE INVESTIGATIONS

BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

SEASON OF 1915.

MAR 20 1915.

AMARILLO: Week ending March 20, 1915:

The season at Amarillo this year is unusually backward due to cold, wet and cloudy weather which has prevailed since about the middle of February. As a result field operations are nearly two weeks behind time - the seeding of Cereal Spring grain varieties have been done only since the middle of the present week. Up till then the ground has simply been too wet to go onto with farm implements. Saturday, a week ago, was our first Spring like day and except for two days since then the weather has been rather cold and disagreeable.

Precipitation since October 1st to date has amounted to 7" -4" of which came the latter part of October. Since Jan. 1st 2.09" of precipitation fell mostly in the form of snow. Of this 0.25" came in Jan. and 1.55" in February-nearly all during the last ten days of the month.

No zero weather has prevailed here this past winter- the mercury rarely falling as low as 20 above. The minimum was 7 above on Jan. 17 and the maximum since the first of the year was 77 on February 11th.

There has been a minimum of wind for this section during the past winter - there having been only one or two occasions approaching the sandstorm stage.

Winter crops over this section have come thru with good stands - there being little evidence of soil heaving from frost. Growth has been somewhat retarded by continued cold weather. With the amount of moisture stored in the soil at this time, crop prospects are very good to begin with.

The unprotected land on the station has suffered some from soil blowing - especially the summer tilled and early fall plowed plats. Considerable of blown soil was lodged in the A plats of the small grain C.C. series. This together with the snow also lodged in these plats made the ground so wet and soggy that it is only now getting in shape to be worked. Thistles on these plats were raked off and burned.

Since arriving at the station on the 11th, time has been put in familiarizing myself with office records and station conditions. Seed grains have been treated for smut and everything is in readiness, weather continuing favorable, to begin work on the Dry Land plats the first of next week.

John S. Cole visited the station the 13th leaving the next morning for Big Springs, Texas.

Maximum temperature for the week was 67 on the 18th and minimum 19 on the 19th. Precipitation traces of snow on the 17th and 19th.

BELLEFOURCHE: Week ending March 20, 1915:

The snowfall for all of South Dakota west of the Missouri River has been exceptionally heavy this winter. There is still a considerable amount left, especially on stubble land. This snow, together with the moisture from the late fall rains, will undoubtedly moisten the soil deep enough to insure a good start for crops this spring.

Winter wheat and winter rye have apparently survived the winter in good condition.

From the present indications it will be at least two weeks before spring work can be started as it will require that much time for the snow to disappear and the surface of the ground to dry.

The weather for the past week has been cold and windy, with a little snow.

COLBY: Week ending March 13, 1915:

No field work was done this week because of the snow on the ground. Snow began falling Feb. 26 and continued at intervals till last Sunday. During that period the total snow fall was 18.5". Scarcely any of the snow drifted. The D. L. A. plats are covered quite uniformly. The weather being rather cold, the snow did not melt much till today, when it turned warmer. Runoff will be comparatively slight as the ground is not frozen.

Maximum temperature 40; minimum 8; average hourly wind velocity 3.2mi.

COLBY: Week ending March 20, 1915:

The weather has been chilly all week with the exception of last Sunday, when it was warm and melted most of the snow on level ground. During the first part of the week the sky was clear and the wind velocity low, but the last few days have been windy, cloudy, foggy, and snowy, though no appreciable amount of snow has fallen. If the weather warms up field work will begin Monday.

Weather for the week: Maximum temperature 49; minimum 20. Average hourly wind velocity 6 mi. Precipitation .12".

GARDEN CITY: Week ending March 20:

The weather for the month to date has been very cool and cloudy; and the 2.53" of precipitation which fell during the latter part of Feb. principally as snow has made the soil too wet for any field work until within the past week.

The soil is filled with moisture to a depth of about 18" and there will be no difficulty in securing a good seed bed for spring grains.

Oat seeding was finished on the 19th, and the spring wheat and barley plats will be seeded as soon as the soil can be prepared.

With the exception of the last four days there has been comparatively little wind movement.

Maximum and minimum temperatures for the week 60 and 19.

HAYS: Week ending March 20:

Weather during the past week has been changeable, part cloudy most the time, with occasional spells of sunshine alternating with snow flurries. Snow which has been on the ground for some time is now all gone except in the low or protected places where it had drifted. Light freezes nearly every night. Generally quiet, but windy today.

The ground is still too wet for field work, but it is drying out rapidly.

Although there is not a heavy growth of wheat like there is some years at this time, there is a fairly good stand and the prospects at the present writing are fair for a good crop.

HUNTLEY: Week ending March 20:

The temperatures for the winter season have been above normal. The precipitation which has been about normal is as follows: Jan. .48", Feb. .02" and to date in March .38".

The winter grain is in good condition. With the soil dry and the growth rather small December 1st conditions seemed to favor winter killing. However, the ground was covered with snow at the time when there was extremely cold weather. The warm weather last week started growth.

During the week the sod broken last fall has been double disked and the block is being fenced. Farmers in the community have been disking and harrowing fall plowed land, and some are plowing sod. Owing to the small amount of rainfall last fall the soil contains less moisture this spring than it has for the last two years.

NORTH PLATTE: Week ending March 20:

Weather continues cold with very little sunshine. The heavy snow which covered the ground a week ago has been slowly melting. The larger drifts still remain and there is still considerable frost in the ground.

No field work has been done and indications are that the ground will not be frost-free and dry enough to work for some time yet. It is now past the first seeding date for four out of the past eight years on this station.

Winter grains seem to have come thru the winter in very good shape.

Maximum temperature for week 47 on the 18th; minimum 11 on the 14th.

TUCUMCARI: Week ending March 20:

Instead of having the usual high winds of spring we have been having, this year, almost continuous cloudy weather with frequent snows and rather mild temperatures.

The plats planted to spring wheat, oats and barley were seeded on the 5th of March, and while none is above ground as yet, the seed has been examined and has been found to be sending out vigorous roots and the stems have almost reached the surface.

A little over an acre of land has been prepared and holes dug for trees for an addition for our present orchard.

All plowing except the A plats of the M. C. Series and a few others requiring late plowing has been completed.

This past week was largely spent in painting posts and other outdoor woodwork around the "farmstead".

The feeding experiment that was started on the station in cooperation with the N. M. Agr. Coll. is progressing nicely and all steers are making good gains.

A week ago the writer made a trip to the "Plains" south of Tucumcari and found everyone enthusiastic over the prospects for good crops this year. The acreage of winter wheat on the plains is almost twice that of last year.

All the farmers in the country "hereabouts" say that they have never seen the soil in better condition and better prospects for a successful crop season than is the case at present.

Mr. John S. Cole visited the station March 20.

GENERAL NOTES:

Mr. E. Q. Perry, who has been employed by this office at Hays, Kansas, and Dickinson, N. D., as an Assistant, is desirous of locating at one of our stations during the coming season. If the services of a skilled man is needed at any of the stations, it might be well to communicate with Mr. Perry, at the State Agricultural College, Manhattan, Kansas.

Recently the office sent out to the several field men a complete list of all the inventorial property charged to their station. The men will please check those lists up at the very earliest opportunity, noting any property worn out, lost, stolen, etc., also adding anything that is on hand but missing from the list. What we want to get is a complete list of everything at present on hand at the several stations, and have the men sign for just this property and nothing else, as responsible.

NEW REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE HIRING OF SKILLED LABOR:

The Department has been in correspondence with the Civil Service Commission in regard to the matter of the temporary employment of carpenters, painters, plumbers, bricklayers, and other skilled mechanics at the various field stations maintained by this Bureau, with a view to making some arrangement whereby help of this kind might be secured with less delay than we have at times experienced. The Commission proposed that we furnish a list of out field stations where the services of temporary mechanics might be required, and stated that their district secretaries would keep the superintendents of such stations advised of available eligibles. The list was accordingly furnished the Commission, and a copy of it is attached hereto. The following extract from a letter from the Civil Service Commission of the 3rd instant explains how the appointment of temporary mechanics at field stations will henceforth be handled:

> " * * * The Department is respectfully advised that the district secretaries have been informed of the field stations and the names of the superintendents, and requested to furnish eligibles for temporary appointments whenever the needs of the service appear to require. If the Commission has a local secretary at any of the points named, the lists will be furnished him and the superintendent will be advised to call upon such secretary for eligibles when he has need of the services of temporary mechanics. At places where there is no local secretary and lists are furnished, they will be furnished direct to the superintendent. If the superintendent has not been furnished a list of eligibles direct, or if he has not been advised as to whom to call upon for such list, and it becomes necessary to make temporary appointments, they may be made without reference to the list of eligibles, but must be reported by the superintendent at once by letter, with a full statement as to the needs of the service.
>
> The Commission respectfully requests that when changes occur in the location of field stations, by the discontinuance of old stations, by or the addition of new ones, the Department advise the district secretary, or district secretaries, of such change."

When changes are required in the list of field stations this office should be advised in order that the civil service district secretaries may be notified.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) Wm. A. Taylor,

Chief of Bureau.

LIST OF FIELD STATIONS CONDUCTED BY THE BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY WHERE THE SERVICES OF CARPENTERS, PAINTERS, PLUMBERS, BRICKLAYERS, PLASTERERS, OR OTHER MECHANICS MAY BE NEEDED.

State	Station	Location	Superintendent
COLORADO	Dry Land Field Station	Akron	O. J. Grace
MONTANA	Huntley Experiment Farm	Huntley	Dan Hansen
SCOTTSBLUFF	Scottsbluff Expt. Farm	Mitchell	Fritz Knorr
NEW MEXICO	Dry Land Field Station	Tucumcari	H. G. Smith
NORTH DAKOTA	Dry Land Field Station	Mandan	W. A. Peterson
OKLAHOMA	Dry Land Field Station	Lawton	W. M. Osborn
	Dry Land Field Station	Woodward	E. F. Chilcott
SOUTH DAKOTA	Bellefourche Expt. Farm	Newell	Beyer Aune
	Dry Land Field Station	Ardmore	F. L. Kelso
TEXAS	Dry Land Field Station	Big Springs	J. E. Mundell
	Dry Land Field Station	Dalhart	W. D. Griggs

NOTES:

Mr. E. C. Chilcott, Agriculturist in Charge of Dry Land Agriculture Investigations left Monday night on a field trip and will visit ~~Mandan, North Dakota,~~ Woodward and Lawton, Oklahoma, and Big Springs, Texas. At Lawton he will make arrangements for the establishment of a new station.

All "WEEKLY REPORTS" that are not received in Washington by Wednesday afternoon will appear in the following weeks bulletin.

U. S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

W E E K L Y B U L L E T I N

OF THE OFFICE OF

DRY LAND AGRICULTURE INVESTIGATIONS

BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

SEASON OF 1915.

MAR 27 1915

1915.

March 31, 1915.

Amarillo.

During the week ending March 27, the weather has been cold and cloudy -Spring not having opened up yet. Maximum temperature for the week 77 on the 25th, minimum 16 on the 22nd. The mean average temperature for the week was 40. Precipitation a trace on the 26th. The following observations on climatic conditions for this section are taken from the Amarillo News of March 25th. "Ordinarily March is the dryest month of the year. If this should hold good during 1915 we are sure to have an abundant harvest, for a splendid season is in the ground at this time. While a precipitation as high as 2.62 inches has been reported here in March, the average for this month during a period of 23 years, previous to this, has been but slightly more than 1/2 inch. Next to March, January, then December and February in the order named, are the dryest months in the year. We are just now passing out of the four months period that is supposed to be the dryest portion of the year. But the Panhandle is again in excellent shape, as it was at the same time last year and our people are optimistic. The amount of precipitation for the present month has already reached .76 of an inch." (The latter statement is probably based on W. B. reports. The records of the station however, show only .31 inch precipitation for March to date.)

The 57 spring grain plats, including the 5 Canada Field pea plats, were drilled in on the 24th, and 25th. Due to persistent cold weather the winter wheat and rye are not making much headway.

Weather instruments are being put in shape to be set up the first of next week when also soil sampling for the season will be commenced.

Ardmore. Report for week ending March 27:

There still is considerable snow on the ground in this section of the country, but is melting very rapidly today, March 28. We have had a total of twenty-six inches of snow during the winter. The ground has been covered since December 10th and range stock have suffered a great deal. There is scarcely any frost in the ground, and apparently there is an abundance of moisture. I expect that we will be able to get in the fields within the next ten days.

Colby. Report for week ending March 27:

Warm and cold weather have altennated so that no field work was accomplished. Up to Thursday it was warm but since then till today, March 27, it has been quite cold. A half inch of snow fell Thursday, but it is all gone now. No spring seeding has been done in this vicinity. M. C. Milo and corn plats have been sampled. In the fallow plats the moisture is down three feet, while in the rest it does not extend down below 18 inches.

Weather for the week; Maximum temp. 61, minimum 10. Average hourly wind velocity 8 mi. Snowfall .5". Precipitation .12 inch.

Dalhart. Report for week ending March 20:

Beginning with the first of February and continuing to Feb. 12th, the weather was mild and pleasant for the time of year. After Feb. 12th, and up to the present writing the weather has been cold, damp and windy. From Feb. 12th, to March 13th, there was snow on the ground continuously there being no less than eight different snows ranging from about three inches in depth to mere flurries. The average minimum temperature for these two periods being 56 and 48 degrees respectively. The precipitation which has been in the form of snow has been; for Jan. .19 inch, Feb. .72 inch and for March to date .42".

There is a deficiency in the amount of moisture in the soil over last year but considerably more than in 1913.

Winter rye has come through the winter in good condition and shows an excellent stand. It is early to tell in just what condition the winter wheat will come through the winter.

Mr. Cole visited the station on the 21st.

Garden City. Report for week ending March 27th:

The weather during the past week has not been very favorable for field work, it being cold and cloudy most of the time. On several mornings the surface soil was frozen too hard to permit of tillage.

Barley and spring wheat was seeded on the twenty-fifth, and with present moisture conditions and a few warm days, will soon be up. An excellent seed bed was secured for these grains.

Most of the early spring listing will be finished today, the 27th. Nearly all of this work is being done on the Kafir Seed Bed plats.

Maximum temperature for the week 65, minimum 17.

Average maximum and minimum for week, 44 and 22 respectively.

Have had some high winds, but no soil blowing to date.

Hays. Report for week ending March 27th:

Weather continues unsettled, having been warm and spring-like during the first and last parts of the week, with flurries of snow and a drop in temperature to 15 degrees Thursday night.

During the week, seed bed preparation for the small spring grains was completed and spring wheat was seeded Saturday, the 27th.

Mr. H. L. Hildewine, a 1914 graduate of the Kansas State Agricultural College arrived last Sunday evening to assist with the experimental work during the season.

Mandan. Report for week ending March 20:

Excellent weather has prevailed for several weeks.

The greenhouse was heated the first of the month and about 5000 Ulmus pumila (Chinese elm) cuttings were planted. Various methods of rooting the cuttings are being tried since, on account of the promising character of this elm, it is desirable to find some method whereby it can be propagated successfully on an extensive scale.

Some of the hot-beds have been constructed and planted.

The cooperative shelterbelt development work which was inaugurated last October is developing very satisfactorily. According to the terms of this cooperation, the Department will supply trees free of charge (other than express charges) to farmers in the Northern Great Plains area who are prepared to meet certain requirements regarding the character and preparation of the land and the planting, cultivation, and care of the trees, including protection against fires and live stock. This cooperation is confined to North and South Dakota, west of the 100th meridian, and Montana and Wyoming, east of the 5000-foot elevation, and limited to dry land farmers. Applications must be received by April first of the year previous to the year when trees will be supplied. During this interim an inspector will visit the applicant and confer with him regarding the size and location of the shelterbelt, the preparation of the land, planting methods, etc.

Field men of the Office of Dry Land Agriculture who have headquarters in the territory covered by this cooperation will no doubt receive inquiries concerning this work, as inquiries and applications are coming in daily from all parts of the territory. Field men who desire copies of the circular and application and agreement form, can receive same for distribution to applicants from this office.

Big Springs. Report for week ending March 20:

Buildings: The Office, Barn and Residence are being pushed rapidly to completion by the contractor who expects to have them ready for final acceptance by the 15th of April. The barn and implement shed is practically finished with the exception of hanging the large outside doors. The office building is complete with the exception of putting on the last coat of stucco-plaster and pebble-dash on the outside walls. The two office rooms have been plastered on the inside and the concrete floor for the entire floor was placed this week. The residence has the roof all on and the gables have been shingled. The sides of the building will be ready for the stucco-plaster-pebble-dash finish. The carpenters state that the entire building will be ready for the plasterer by the latter part of the coming week.

Farm work: Ninety acres of the farm has been plowed to a depth of six to seven inches. This plowed land is now being worked down with a disk-packer. On examination of the soil, moisture is found to be stored to a depth of thrity inches to four feet. The recent snow of three inches

Big Springs. Continuation of Report for week week ending March 20:

has put enough moisture in the top layer to wet the dry soil on top.

Eighteen varieties of fruit, consisting of apples, pears, peaches, plums and grapes, have been set out in the experimental orchard. These additional trees set out will give, with those trees already in bearing on the station, some two hundred trees for experimental work.

The cold weather of the last few days has killed considerable of the fruit in bloom, but investigation shows that a good crop will still be secured from the later blooming varieties unless more freezing weather occurrs. Mr. John S. Cole visited the station this week.

Dalhart. Report for week ending March 27:

The week opened with a snow storm Monday and with the exception of Wednesday the entire week has been cold and windy. The average minimum temperature for the week being 24, the average maximum 55.

On account of weather conditions it has so far been almost impossible to do any field work.

There has been considerable threshing out of the stack among the farmers during the past six weeks. Many farmers are taking advantage of the good local market for milo heads and are selling to local buyers at from $15.00 to $20.00 per ton.

North Platte. Report for week ending March 27:

Cold weather with little sunshine continues. About two inches of snow fell Thursday, the 25th. This is still on the ground. The soil is still frozen hard. There are no indications that conditions will be such as to allow the beginning of field work very soon.

Mean temperature for week 26.5°. This is 8.6 degrees below the normal for the month of March.

Tucumcari. Report for week ending March 27:

From January first to date the following are the amount of rainfall; or melted snow: Jan. 16 .46, Feb. 19th T, Feb. 20 .71, Feb. 22 .18, Feb. 21 .02 Feb. 26 T, Feb. 27 .07, March 3 .33, March 4 .04, March 9 .01, March 17 .15, March 19 .07; Total precipitation for the part of the year passed 2.04".

The lowest temperature for January was 0 degrees on the 17th and the highest temperature was 61 degrees on the 15th. The lowest and highest temperatures for February were 20 degrees on the 6th, and 74 degrees on the 10th, respectively. Highest and lowest temperatures for March to date are 78 degrees on the 25th, and 19 degrees on the 21st.

The wheat, oats and barley planted in rotations 1 to 9 and on the spring wheat tillage series plats is all up and looks fine. Rye planted on rotations 82 and 84 is up.

Tucumcari. Continuation for week ending March 27:

The winter wheat on the experimental farm is doing very well in spite of the fact that it has been cut off by blowing sand three times this spring.

During the week two plats of alfalfa were planted. These are two plats which were plowed up last fall on account of no stand. Other alfalfa on the station is sending out stems.

Some of the plats had to be disced this week as they had started blowing. So far this spring we have not been much troubled with the blowing of the soil, and now, with the exception of only a few plats, the field is in good condition to resist the effects of the wind.

A number of farmers in this section are starting the plant their main feed crops. We are trying to discourage this practice wherever possible as we are due for over a month of cold weather and the experience on the experimental farm has been that the late planting was the best.

This week we have been having the lines around the station checked up by the county surveyor and he has found several discrepancies. For instance on the north the true line runs nearly 100 ft. north of our present fence line. The east and west lines are a little too far east, and the south line is about right.

Notes.

Mr. E. C. Chilcott, Agriculturist in Charge of Dry Land Agriculture Investigations is now at Lawton, Oklahoma arranging for the establishment of a new field station.

All reports for the weekly bulletin that are not received by Wednesday will appear in following weeks edition.

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